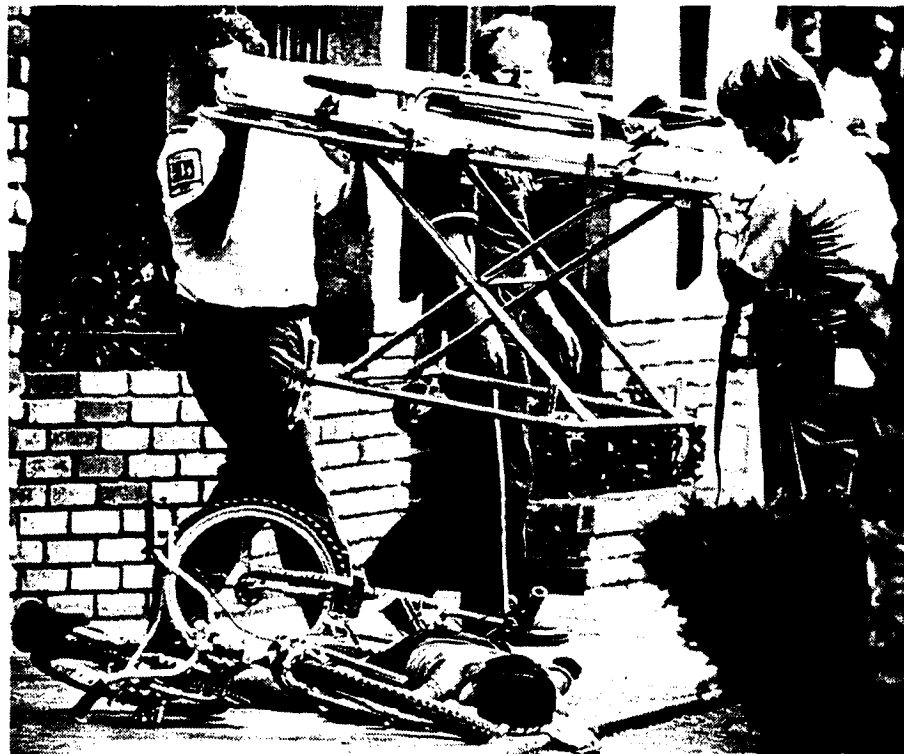


21 Die in San Diego Massacre



Boy slain in San Ysidro massacre lies by bicycle, as paramedics go to aid of wounded in restaurant.

Gunman Terrorizes Restaurant

By DAVID FREED,
Times Staff Writer

SAN DIEGO—In the worst mass-slaying episode in U.S. history, a heavily armed gunman killed 20 people Wednesday afternoon in and around a crowded McDonald's restaurant near the Mexican border before he was shot to death by a police sharpshooter.

"I'm going to kill you all," the gunman yelled before he began firing indiscriminately, authorities said.

The afternoon killing spree ended only after the gunman, identified as James Oliver Huberty, 41, was fatally shot once in the chest by a police sniper perched on the roof of a nearby post office.

At least 15 people also were wounded in the shooting, including a motorist driving on nearby Interstate 5. All of the wounded were outside of the restaurant, located in the San Diego community of San Ysidro, when the shooting began.

Moved in Circle

Police said the majority of the victims were children. Names of most of the dead and wounded were not immediately released.

"It was a massacre," San Diego Police Chief William B. Kolender said after touring the McDonald's, less than a mile from the border. "It's the worst situation we've ever seen."

A hundred or more spent shells from Huberty's shotgun, pistol and semi-automatic hunting rifle were found on the floor of the blood-splattered restaurant.

Witnesses said Huberty calmly fired round after round, moving in a circle around the restaurant as those inside screamed and dived for cover. When one weapon was emptied, he fired the others until they too were emptied. Then, according to survivors, he casually reloaded and began firing again.

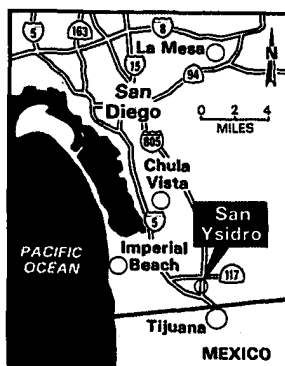
There was no immediate explanation for the massacre. One victim, a wounded 12-year-old boy, told authorities that he heard Hub-

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BRUCE HUFF / Los Angeles Times

In these scenes of terror, clockwise from upper right, a wounded young boy is aided by paramedics, one of the dead victims lies outside a bullet-riddled window, a bloodied girl sits pensively in front of the restaurant and a wounded woman is helped away from the scene of the massacre by a police officer.



DON CLEMENT / Los Angeles Times



PHIL DAVIES / Los Angeles Times

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erty say as he entered the restaurant, "I killed thousands in Vietnam, and I want to kill more." Representatives of local Vietnam veterans' groups and the Veterans Administration said they had no recollection of Huberty.

Huberty, who police said had been fired from his job as a security guard at a condominium complex a week ago, had lived in the San Diego area for about seven months, after moving his family from Ohio. He drove to the McDonald's in a black Mercury Marquis.

Most of the killings occurred within minutes after Huberty entered the restaurant at about 4 p.m., police said. He was shot to death by Officer Charles Foster about 5:15 p.m.

Police said they initially delayed firing at Huberty because they were told he might have 15 or more hostages.

When it became known that the carnage was extensive, police commanders countermanded their earlier order not to shoot while Huberty was inside the restaurant.

The suspect was hit three minutes after snipers were given the "green light" to fire. Huberty fell to the floor in front of the restaurant's counter. Sharpshooters observing through binoculars watched his still body for about 15 minutes before a SWAT team rushed inside.

Police said officers fired a total of five shots. Autopsies were to be

and parking lot when they were gunned down.

A McDonald's employee, who would not give his name, said Huberty stepped up to the counter and screamed, "You . . . swine, I'm going to kill all. . . ."

Seven restaurant workers survived by hiding in a basement storage room.

Contributing to these stories were Times staff writers Miles Corwin, Matt Damsker, Barry M. Horstman, Thomas Howlett, Lanie Jones, Marjorie Miller, Cyndi Mitchell, Pamela Moreland, Nancy Ray, Bill Ritter, Jeanette Valentine and Daniel M. Weintraub.

performed on the victims to determine if any of them, other than Huberty, had been struck by police bullets.

Seventeen of the 21 dead, including customers and employees, were killed inside the McDonald's. The remaining four fatalities, including a boy on a bicycle, were in the restaurant's adjoining playground

"We couldn't see anything; we just kept hearing shots," said one of the employees, Raul Rubio, who was still trembling an hour after the shootings. "We kept quiet and didn't make any noise. We were so scared."

One customer inside the restaurant, Griselda Diaz of Tijuana, said she and her young son, Erwin,

were in McDonald's eating when tall, thin Huberty entered dressed in camouflage pants and a black T-shirt. Then, Diaz said, Huberty began firing in a circle, calmly reloading his weapon each time he emptied a clip of bullets.

Diaz and her son dived to the floor. Diaz said she managed to crawl behind a counter and through a side door, handing her son to an unidentified woman who was crouched outside. The woman then dashed to her car and drove away with Erwin.

Two hours after the firing stopped, Diaz had not yet been reunited with her son.

Huberty ordered those inside the restaurant not to move, according to other witnesses. When one woman did, she was shot through the head.

As the firing began, many of those outside scrambled to find any available cover. Three people were wounded but managed to crawl about 20 yards to the nearby post office, where an eight-man police

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sharpshooter team eventually was positioned.

The shooting shattered nearly all the McDonald's windows and knocked out the windshields of cars parked outside.

Officer Bill Nelson, who entered the McDonald's moments after it was secured, said Huberty was shot once "right in the 10 ring," a term referring to a target's bull's-eye.

San Diego Mayor Roger Hedgecock also toured the shooting site after the firing stopped and described the scene inside as "horrible. . . ."

"There was a family group—a father a mother and a small child and a couple guys about 30," he said. "It was a gruesome sight, a barbaric act, an unexplainable tragedy. They were shot dead where they sat and some were on the floor."

Worried that motorists on nearby Interstate 5 might get shot, the California Highway Patrol asked U.S. Customs officials to close the border until the gunman could be stopped. All 16 northbound gates at the San Ysidro port of entry were closed at 4:30 p.m., backing up traffic for miles.

The border was reopened minutes after Huberty was killed.

A partial list of people killed in the massacre includes:

Omarr Hernandez, 11, San Ysidro.

Alicia Aieda Victoria, 70, Tijuana.

Miguel Victoria, 74, Tijuana.